

Impact of Flooding in West Midlands and Available Emergency Disaster Resources

MLA West Midlands is gathering information on the impact of the recent floods, particularly in the worst affected areas of Worcestershire, Shropshire and Herefordshire, to help inform future development when these emergency situations occur. Within these three counties there are a total of 82 museums, 72 libraries, 15 mobile libraries and 3 archives.

If your organisation has been affected by the adverse weather conditions, or you know of one that has, please let us know. We are especially interested in the specific problem caused, any damage to collections or buildings and how this has affected service delivery ie. Are they still open to the public? What kind of problems are they facing to recuperate? What temporary measures are being taken to tackle the immediate problems? Etc.

Please contact: Paula Brikci, Standards & Stewardship Officer.
paula.brikci@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

This is a high priority for the Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) and information gathered will inform reports from across the MLA Partnership to advocate for increased Government support for the sector in dealing with emergency situations of this nature.

Listed below are some of the ways museums, libraries and archives have been affected either by flooding or by heavy rain, that have been reported so far. The main message that has come through from museums, libraries and archives is that, even if flooding has been experienced, the public are put off from visiting because of the media news, not because the actual museum, library or archive has had to close. We have also listed a few of the available resources to give advice and support to any organisations that have been affected. (These lists will be updated as more information comes through).

- Part flooding in entrance ways has meant visitors use an alternative entrance
- Premises were closed for one or two days due to the danger of staff getting in to work because of flooded roads
- Heavy rain causing blocked down pipes and so caused some flooding and electrical problems
- Flooding and mud has caused some damage to carpets and furniture but quite minimal once dried out with dehumidifiers
- Heavy rain through the roof threatened a collection, set of the alarms and electrical fittings had to be isolated
- More significant flooding has caused loss of stock and ruined flooring, furniture and IT equipment

One gallery has used the opportunity through a press release to reassure the public that they are open for business as usual and that all the main roads to them are accessible.

Flood Help Resources:

Renaissance at Work (RAW)

Help is available from the RAW team; although the team is small so practical help will be limited. It is hoped that help may be available on a more formal basis if Renaissance funding continues into another phase. Plans for a regional Emergency Response Strategy are being made. Plans are at an early stage and thus can be informed by the experience of museums in the region. If any museum is prepared to share their experiences to help to develop the emergency strategy, please contact RAW:

Jane Thompson Webb,
RAW and Collection Care,
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
Jane.Thompson-Webb@birmingham.gov.uk

Birmingham Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Flood Response - help for affected businesses

Flood affected businesses can call the Business Link Contact Centre on: 0845 113 1234

What happens next?

The Advisor undertakes a brief phone consultation with the business to establish whether the issue can be dealt with over the phone or requires a visit. If a visit is required, this is undertaken by the Advisor.

Using our full range of advisors up to 5 days free time can be offered to mentor and support businesses to develop a recovery plan which will also include proposals for: Short term/immediate activities, Medium term plan and Long term objectives.

The recovery plan will link into all appropriate support i.e. skills (e.g. retraining into other areas of the business), local authority actions, and Business Link and partner services.

Following completion of the flood recovery plan the Business Link can provide a specific business recovery grant for businesses who can show a trade loss where insurance is unavailable, providing 100% of the costs up to £2,500 towards consultancy costs to implement the recovery plan.

Business Link is actively looking at working with groups/organisations in engaging with flood affected businesses as well as supporting promotional activity/seminars throughout the Region.

If you are intending to or wish to organise an event or have businesses that need assistance and would like support please contact Lucy Turner on 0845 241 8269. For general business enquiries please use the Regional Gateway on 08451131234

Collections Link

The national advisory service for collections management. Collections Link provides fast, easy access to current best practice in 16 areas of professional collections management. It is free to use thanks to funding from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

<http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/>

Water damaged collections?

The Institute of Conservation operates the Conservation Register to put you in touch with accredited conservators.

The EMERGENCY RESPONSE services provided by conservators on the Register include:

Emergency response training
Flood damaged items

Immediate remedial treatment
Participation in salvage teams

These can be combined with conventional search terms such as prints, textiles, social history objects.

www.conservationsregister.com/login.asp?id=5

For other enquiries relating to the Conservation Register or finding a conservator please contact:

Caroline Saye
Icon, Institute of Conservation
3rd Floor Downstream Building
1 London Bridge
London SE1 9BG
Tel 020 7785 3804
Email csaye@icon.org.uk

Harwell Document Restoration Services

HDRS can provide technologically advanced but cost-effective restoration methods for the insurance industry, damage management companies, records management services and the heritage sector.

You can call them for help to restore:

- Financial documentation and other business records
- Legal documentation (including deeds)
- Archival documents (including parchments)
- School materials (exercise books, textbooks, teaching materials)
- Photographs (prints, slides, transparencies, black & white/colour)
- Maps, plans, blueprints, architectural drawings
- Books (modern and antiquarian in a wide range of bindings and covers, including leather, vellum)
- Prints, drawings, works of art on paper
- Oil paintings and watercolours
- Audio-visual media (tapes, videos, DVDs, microfilm etc)
- Plus many other objects

Ring us on 0800 019 9990

<http://www.hdrs.co.uk/>

Flooding in England: Enjoy England advice for travellers

With parts of the country affected by the recent adverse weather conditions and flood damage, you may require information as to how this affects your travel arrangements and holiday plans. While the impact of flooding is devastating to those directly affected, we expect the effects on tourism to be quite localised.

<http://www.enjoyengland.com/tourist-information/flood-update.aspx>

GO-WM Link? <http://www.go-wm.gov.uk/497745/docs/232148/GOFloodingResponse>

UK Resilience

The Government's aim is to reduce the risk from emergencies so that people can go about their business freely and with confidence. This website exists to provide a resource for civil protection practitioners, supporting the work which goes on across the UK to improve emergency preparedness.

<http://www.ukresilience.info/>

Description of the Risk:

- Widespread flooding affected Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands and West Midlands in late June.
- Flooding caused by heavy rain from Friday 20th July has affected much of Central, Southern and Western England with widespread flooding and disruption in the Avon, Great Ouse, Severn and Thames catchment areas.

Information and Guidance for the Public:

- Environment Agency: current flooding situation - The National Summary for England and Wales, searchable by area, town name, post code, and river name.
- Health Protection Agency - Gives advice on looking after your health if you've been flooded.
- Flood Support microsite - Includes a flood simulator, case studies, flood support fact sheets and a FAQ.
- Am I at risk of flooding? - Environment Agency flood map to assess flood risk by postcode.
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency - Flood map: Could the area where you live be affected by flooding?
- Installing Flood Defences - Help and advice on flood defence products.
- What to do if a flood happens - Staying safe in a flood.
- Online Flood Library - All the Environment Agency's flood literature in one place.
- ABI - Association of British Insurers - Flooding and Insurance CIRIA - Construction Industry Research Information Association - Repair and restoration of buildings following floods.

<http://www.ukresilience.info/latest/flooding.aspx>

National Organisations for Preparing for Emergencies

This page lists the main websites of key organisations working in this field

<http://www.go-wm.gov.uk/prepemergencies/423673/>